

UPPER DARBY SAFE SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP



UPPER DARBY SCHOOL DISTRICT

PROJECT CO-DIRECTORS

Annette Brandolini
Director of Pupil Services
Upper Darby School District

Timothy Boyce
Captain
Upper Darby Fire Department

January 10, 2006

UPPER DARBY COMMUNITY

- 24 schools (13 public & 11 non-public):
 - 10 are part of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia
- Located on the border of West Philadelphia.
- 8 square miles with a population of 90,000.
- 18,000 students:
 - 3 high schools totaling 6,000 students -
4,000 students in Upper Darby High School
 - Delaware County Memorial Hospital is adjacent to the high schools

SPECIAL NEEDS COMMUNITY



- STUDENTS
- TEACHERS
- AIDES
- VISITORS
- COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES
- SCHOOL AS A SHELTER
- ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

UPPER DARBY SPECIAL NEEDS POPULATION

- 1,736 special education students.

This total represents:

- 5 Emotional support programs
 - 4 Autistic support programs
 - 1 Multiple handicapped classroom
 - 7 Life skills classrooms
-
- 200+ Students with refugee status.
 - 434 English language learners.
 - 40 Languages represented.

SAFE SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

- Public and private schools
- Local governmental agencies
- Office of behavioral health
- County government
- District attorney's office
- United States attorney's office
- Joint Terrorism Task Force

PLANNING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS - LESSONS LEARNED

- Communication is essential to understanding the problem and finding solutions.
- Involve administrators, teachers, and parents in the planning process.
- Practice your plan frequently and everywhere.
- Learn from the mistakes.
- Never forget that it is our responsibility to have a recovery plan in place.

CONDUCT A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- THREATS:
 - Protecting students for an extended time
- OPPORTUNITIES:
 - Conducting multi-hazard drills
- WEAKNESSES:
 - Understanding the capabilities of responders
- STRENGTHS:
 - Implementing new training techniques and management tools

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PHASES

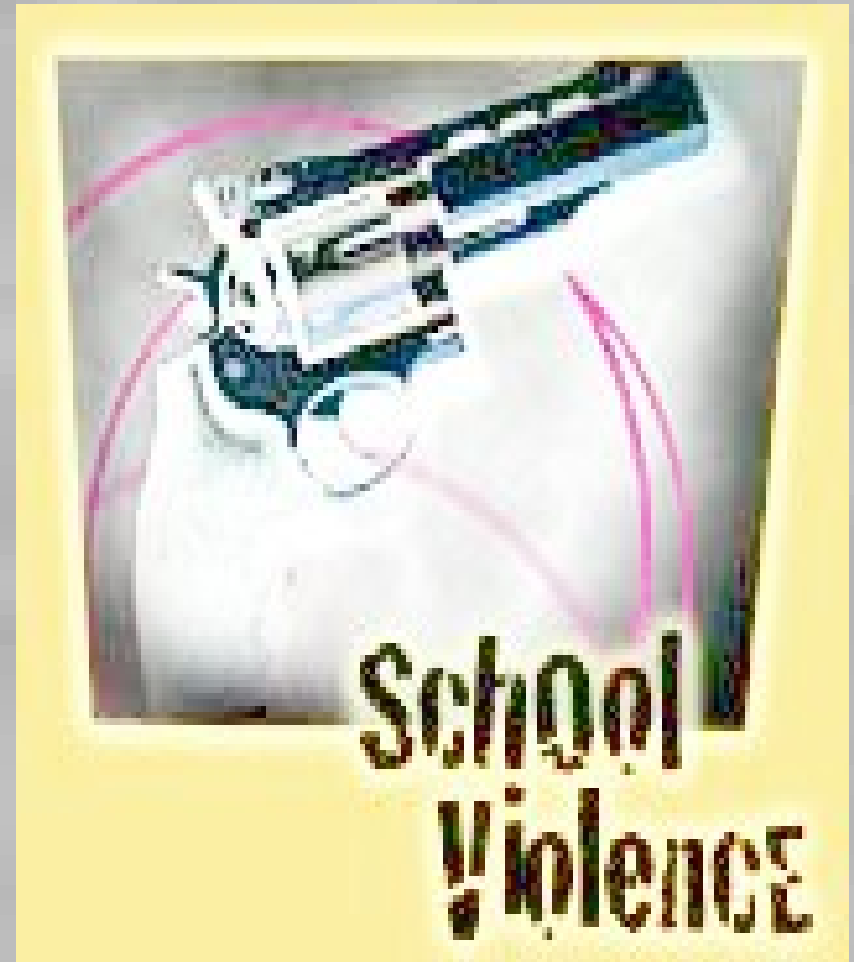
- PREVENTION
- PLANNING
- RESPONSE
- RECOVERY



- Consequence
- Vulnerability
- Threat

PREVENTION

- A working partnership is critical:
 - Know your risks
- Physical Tools:
 - Deter
 - Delay
 - Deny
- What affect do these tools have on students with special needs?



PREVENTION

- Conduct focus groups with parents of students with special needs.
- Cross train shelter schools to deal with students with special needs.
- Consult with teachers and other experts in the field.
- Train emergency responders on the best practices for managing individuals with special needs.

PLANNING

- Planning is a proactive process.
- Involves effort:
 - Money
 - Talent
 - Time
 - All must be respected
- Emergency Response and Crisis Management (ERCM) grant has allowed us to expand our Safe Schools Plan to better meet the needs of special groups.

RESPONSE

- Based on the “Plan.”
- Keep the choices simple and clear:
 - Evacuate
 - Shelter
 - Lockdown
- Special needs response requires more training. Don't count on heroics.



RESPONSE

- Events that occur during the response will exacerbate the problem for students with special needs.
- Realistic, controlled training is the only way you will discover some challenges.



SHELTER

- Most serious events will require leaving school grounds for shelter.
- Responders will focus on the emergency first.
- Sheltering will fall largely on school staff:
 - Shelter schools may not deal regularly with your special needs population.
 - Students will be out of their familiar environment.
 - Regular faculty may be unable to continue care.
 - Emotional students can greatly disrupt shelters.
 - Expect medical emergencies to occur in shelters.

SHELTER IN PLACE ISSUES



- Special needs populations may not be able to endure extended stress situations.
- Shelters may require special foods, water, & medicine.
- Plan special areas for:
 - Counseling
 - Medical treatment
 - Personal care issues
- Anticipate the needs that will develop as the event continues:
 - Transportation-Relief-Staff

ERCM GRANT - SELECTED ACTIVITIES

- Hold focus groups with parents of students with special needs.
- Hold a series of meetings with teachers/staff of students with special needs, as well as expert consultants to better understand their needs in an emergency and related issues.
- Research, develop, pilot test, and refine and train personnel to use protocols that address special populations in Upper Darby public and non-public schools.
- Coordinate a plan to deliver medicines to disabled students during lockdowns.
- Work with mental health system to develop approaches for working with special populations during the recovery phase.